Metrovision Workforce Community Audit
Cluster Retreat Breakout Sessions
Facilitators Guide

MetroVision, in partnership with the four regional Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) is conducting a labor market demand study. The purpose of the study is to determine what skills are most needed by regional companies and how the training and education providers can better provide training and education services to meet those needs.

The first step in that process is identifying specific skills needed, now and in the future, and setting up active, dynamic communications systems to ensure those needs are matched with skill training available. The second is to make sure that the system is ongoing so that current and future needs are adequately addressed. In either case, the best solutions can be provided through collaborative efforts of industry and providers.

After an initial introduction to the cluster concept and existing MetroVision research, participants will break off into 7-8 groups organized by cluster. There will be other "support" industries represented also. As we have developed data on comparative wage rates and projected growth by using standard industrial codes (SIC codes), there will be some companies whose labor skills, training and recruitment needs have not been analyzed. In these cases, the companies should be asked to provide information about specific skills and/or occupations they see as having current or future unmet needs. We will provide follow-up analysis after the retreat and include that analysis in the workforce audit report.

The information we need to extract is as follows. Given the limited timeframe, it is understood that not all of the information below may be provided. The goal is to get an initial needs inventory, with the understanding that additional follow-up will be necessary. That is one goal of the proposed communication system--to provide ongoing communication of these factors within each industry. The actions requested are:

I. Training, Education and Learning Issues by Cluster
- List current critical occupational needs (i.e. - most vacancies, hardest to recruit, train etc)
- List projected critical occupational needs
- List specifics of training required for incumbent workers to earn promotions & move up the career ladder
- List the skill sets required in these critical existing and emerging positions
- Identify training and education systems and programs currently used that are effective & successful

II. Cluster-by-Cluster System Disconnects & Potential Remedies

- Identify & prioritize most critical gaps in education and training
- Identify known disconnects between supply and demand of labor. Brainstorm & prioritize solutions
- List most effective systems of recruitment
- Determine level of awareness of Workforce Investment Board programs and services and how they could be improved
- List vital support industries needed for the companies

Each facilitator will be asked to give a brief summary (no more than a few sentences highlighting the most surprising or revealing comments) after the general session reconvenes. During the session, a MetroVision or WIB staff member will be assigned to each group to take notes. **Please do not let the sessions evolve into "gripe" sessions or discussions of general problems**. **Try to keep the discussions focused on identification of problems and potential solutions.** The information to be discussed will be provided to each participant, their reaction to the data should serve as the beginning point to the discussions.

The development of effective delivery systems for workforce skills is one of the most important factors in the economic future of the New Orleans region. Your participation in this most important effort is greatly appreciated.